

### Every Mind Matters this winter



The colder weather and darker evenings can have an adverse effect on the way some people feel and can leave them struggling to cope during the winter months.

Therefore, it's vital that we protect our mental health, just as we do our physical health throughout the cold season – ensuring we can recognise the signs that we need support and that we know how to access it.

We're supporting national efforts by Public Health England (PHE) who have launched [Every Mind Matters](#), a campaign to empower people take control of their own mental health.

We want everyone in Essex to prioritise their mental wellbeing this winter and feel confident when taking action to protect themselves. To discover the simple steps you can take to look after your mental health, take a short quiz which will help shape your personalised mind plan.

You can find this, as well as information about local mental health support and services, on the [Livewell campaign website](#).

### Are you ready for winter?



Winter is now well and truly on the way and it's important that you, your family and friends are prepared to brave the cold snap.

The cold weather can affect your health and wellbeing. This is more likely if you are over 65, under 5, pregnant, have a long-term health condition or disability. However, there are lots of small steps you can take now to stay safe and well this winter.

The [NHS website](#) has lots of information, advice and guidance – from keeping your home warm, to protecting your health in the cold and checking in regularly on elderly relatives and neighbours.

The winter season can also affect how we feel mentally. [Seasonal Affective Disorder \(SAD\)](#) is a type of depression aligned to seasonal patterns. Symptoms can include persistently low mood, irritability and feelings of despair.

If this sounds like something you, or someone you know, may be experiencing, there is lots of support available locally. Find out more on the [Livewell campaign website](#).

### The art of building relationships



It's easy to think that living in a place where you're surrounded by other people, you would naturally make friends, build relationships and never feel alone. However, many older people living in a care home experience loneliness and can become socially isolated. They may have moved away from a familiar environment and as they've got older, their social circles have reduced.

That's why for the past two years, we've worked with Anglia Ruskin University and some of the UK's leading arts and health organisations to explore the power of arts and culture within care home settings, and how they can build and strengthen relationships between residents and care home staff.

What we found was that the arts - music, dance and crafts - have a unique way of engaging people, enabling them to express themselves creatively, build on their strengths and help them to connect with others in positive ways. We saw the breaking down of boundaries between residents, their relatives and staff, as well as residents and their wider communities.

The information we've gathered will now be used to inform future thinking around arts provision in care home settings as well as future programmes of work. You can find out more about what we found on the [Explore Culture website](#), or by watching the film below.

### Crossing Temple Barns



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## **Enter the magical world of Christmas at Cressing**

The award-winning magical grotto experience returns to Cressing Temple Barns this festive season. Be swept back to a time when you truly believed with this traditional Christmas experience at the beautiful setting of Cressing in the heart of Essex.

This guided experience to meet Father Christmas, his reindeer and elves, will win the hearts of adults and children alike.

Be met by your elf and led on a magical adventure.

### **Along the way children can:**

- write and send a letter to Father Christmas
- make a special Christmas wish with the Wish Queen
- sit in the sleigh, which is being prepared for the big day, and take photos
- choose a gift from the Toy Shop
- make some Christmas crafts to take home
- play some seasonal games
- meet the real reindeer
- meet Father Christmas

Adults will receive a glass of mulled wine and a mince pie.

The experience is a minimum of 45 minutes, but you can stay for up to 1 ½/ 2 hours, it's completely up to you.

Why not enjoy a meal at the Tiptree Barns' tea rooms before or after your experience and make a real day of it.

Discover our 'twilight' sessions from 4-6pm for extra special atmosphere as you tour the historic 13th century barns in the dark. These sessions have their own kind of magic.

Book now at

<https://experiencetickets.co.uk/project/magical-grotto/> or call 01206 573948

Please note that children must be accompanied by at least one adult.